

that are designed to assure that the elections of board members are conducted in an impartial manner.

(b) No employee or agent of a Farm Credit institution shall take any part, directly or indirectly, in the nomination or election of members to the board of directors of a Farm Credit institution, or make any statement, either orally or in writing, which may be construed as intended to influence any vote in such nominations, or elections. This paragraph shall not prohibit employees or agents from providing biographical and other similar information or engaging in other activities pursuant to policies and procedures for nominations and elections. This paragraph does not affect the right of an employee or agent to nominate or vote for stockholder-elected directors of an institution in which the employee or agent is a voting member.

(c) No property, facilities, or resources, including information technology and human or financial resources, of any Farm Credit institution shall be used by any candidate for nomination or election or by any other person for the benefit of any candidate for nomination or election, unless the same property, facilities, or resources are simultaneously available and made known to be available for use by all declared candidates, including floor nominees. For the limited purpose of Farm Credit bank board elections, each Farm Credit bank may allow its stockholder-associations to use stockholder-association property, facilities, or resources in support of bank director candidates. Any Farm Credit bank permitting this activity by its stockholder-associations must have a policy in place approved by its board of directors establishing reasonable standards that stockholder-associations must follow, and those standards must give appropriate consideration to the various sizes of stockholder-associations within a bank's district and include a maximum amount that a stockholder-association may expend in support of a bank director candidate.

(d) No director, employee, or agent of a Farm Credit institution shall, for the purpose of furthering the interests of any candidates for nomination or election, furnish or make use of records

that are not made available for use by all declared candidates.

(e) No Farm Credit institution may in any way distribute or mail, whether at the expense of the institution or another, any campaign materials for director candidates. Institutions may request biographical information, as well as the disclosure information required under §611.330, from all declared candidates who certify that they are eligible, restate such information in a standard format, and distribute or mail it with ballots or proxy ballots.

(f) No director of a Farm Credit institution shall, in his or her capacity as a director, make any statement, either orally or in writing, which may be construed as intending to influence any vote in that institution's director nominations or elections. This paragraph shall not prohibit director candidates from engaging in campaign activities on their own behalf.

[53 FR 50392, Dec. 15, 1988, as amended at 71 FR 5761, Feb. 2, 2006; 75 FR 18740, Apr. 12, 2010]

§611.325 Bank and association nominating committees.

Each Farm Credit bank and association may have only one nominating committee in any one election cycle. Each Farm Credit bank and association's board of directors must establish and maintain policies and procedures on its nominating committee, describing the formation, composition, operation, resources, and duties of the committee, consistent with current laws and regulations. Each nominating committee must conduct itself in the impartial manner prescribed by the policies and procedures adopted by its institution under §611.320 and this section.

(a) *Composition.* The voting stockholders of each bank and association must elect a nominating committee of no fewer than three members. Unless prohibited by association bylaws, out-of-territory borrowers who hold voting stock may serve as members of an association's nominating committee. If an association's bylaws prohibit it, that association must inform, in writing and at the time of loanmaking, each out-of-territory borrower that out-of-territory borrowers may not

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serve on the association's nominating committee.

(b) *Election.* Farm Credit banks and associations may use in-person (including use of an online medium and proxy ballots) or mail balloting procedures to elect a nominating committee.

(1) Farm Credit banks and associations must provide voting stockholders the opportunity to vote on the candidates for each nominating committee position.

(2) Association nominating committee members may only be elected to a 1-year term. Farm Credit Banks must use weighted voting, with no cumulative voting permitted, when electing members to serve on a nominating committee. Farm Credit banks and associations may permit nominating committee members to be re-nominated and stand for re-election to serve successive terms.

(c) *Conflicts of interest.* No individual may serve on a nominating committee who, at the time of election to, or during service on, a nominating committee, is an employee, director, or agent of that bank or association. A nominating committee member may not be a candidate for election to the board in the same election for which the committee is identifying nominees. A nominating committee member may resign from the committee to run for election to the board only if the individual did not attend any nominating committee meeting.

(d) *Responsibilities.* It is the responsibility of each nominating committee to identify, evaluate, and nominate candidates for stockholder election to a Farm Credit bank or association board of directors. A nominating committee's responsibilities are limited to the following:

(1) Nominate individuals who the committee determines meet the eligibility requirements to run for open director positions. The committee must endeavor to ensure representation from all areas of the Farm Credit bank's or association's territory and, as nearly as possible, all types of agriculture practiced within the territory.

(2) Evaluate the qualifications of the director candidates. The evaluation process must consider whether there are any known obstacles preventing a

candidate from performing the duties of the position.

(3) Nominate at least two candidates for each director position being voted on by stockholders. If two nominees cannot be identified, the nominating committee must provide written explanation to the existing board of the efforts to locate candidates or the reasons for disqualifying any other candidate that resulted in fewer than two nominees.

(4) Maintain records of its meetings, including a record of attendance at meetings.

(5) Identify, evaluate, and nominate eligible individuals for service on the next nominating committee, if permitted by the institution.

(e) *Resources.* Each Farm Credit bank and association must provide its nominating committee reasonable access to administrative resources in order for the committee to perform its duties. Each Farm Credit bank and association must, at a minimum, provide its nominating committee with FCA regulations and guidance on nominating committees, a current list of stockholders, the most recent bylaws, the current director qualifications policy, and a copy of the policies and procedures that the bank or the association has adopted pursuant to §611.320(a) ensuring impartial elections. On the request of the nominating committee, the institution must also provide a summary of the current board self-evaluation. The bank or association may require a pledge of confidentiality by committee members prior to releasing evaluation documents.

[75 FR 18741, Apr. 12, 2010]

§611.326 Floor nominations for open Farm Credit bank and association director positions.

(a) Each floor nominee must be eligible for the director position for which the person has been nominated.

(b)(1) Voting stockholders of associations must be allowed to make floor nominations for every open stockholder-elected director position. Associations using only mail ballots must allow nominations from the floor at every session of an annual meeting. Associations permitting stockholders to cast votes during annual meetings may